

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 are currently pending in the application.

In the office action, the Examiner identified features of the invention which were argued in the previous response which were deemed to not be explicitly set forth in the claims. Based on this indication, Claim 1 and 7 have been amended by changing "register" to "obtain user-level registration." (Claim 1, lines 9-10; Claim 7, line 9) Support for such amendments may be found in the specification at page 2, lines 10-11, 13-15, and 17-18, and at page 5, line 5. Claims 1 and 7 have also been amended by adding the phrase "by email." (Claim 1, line 21; Claim 7, line 21) Support for such amendments may be found at Figure 1 and in the Specification at page 7, lines 2-3. Since the added subject matter has already been identified by the Examiner, consideration of the amendment at this time is requested.

The Claimed Invention

The claimed invention involves a system and a process for managing business, technical and operational data using a single interface in a shared space environment over the Internet, including a common authentication and environment. A supplier portal creates a central repository for registration process, information, company information, and user information, making this information available to all applications that open into the supplier portal. In response to a request received from a supplier (guest) coordinator 101, a userid/password 102 is obtained, which is then supplied to the business representative 103. An application coordinator requests to create company and provide information to the portal administrator at 104. This information includes the company name, application, and supplier coordinator name, userid, e-mail, etc. A determination is made in decision block 105 as to whether the supplier is registered. If the supplier is not registered, then a company profile is created in function block 106. If the supplier is registered, then a further determination is made in decision block 107 as to whether the

application is registered. If the application is not registered, then a company and its mapping is created in function block 108 and, in function block 109, the supplier coordinator is registered and authorized to use the application. If the application is registered as determined in decision block 107, then a further determination is made in decision block 110 as to whether the application is mapped to the supplier and supplier coordinator. If the application is not mapped to the supplier and supplier coordinator, the supplier coordinator mapping to the application is created in function block 111. Finally, an e-mail note is sent to the supplier coordinator application administrator in function block 112.

Claims 1-7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,606,606 to Starr. The Examiner's arguments in support of rejections repeat verbatim the Examiner's arguments in the previous office action. Applicants therefore traverse and incorporate by reference the response to the previous office action as if fully restated herein. In particular, the claimed supplier portal handles account setup in a manner patentably distinct from what is disclosed and taught by Starr.

In the previous office action, the Examiner stated that the arguments were not persuasive, in part because "limitations that are not taught by the cited prior art" (Office Action at 6) were not reflected in the language of Claims 1 and 7:

[W]here in the independent claim is it cited that "email is sent to prospective approvers," or that the registration is "at the user level" as opposed to the "subscriber level" [?]

(Office Action at 6) While Applicants' disagree with the Examiner's reading of the claims, Claims 1 and 7 have been amended in response to the Examiner's comments to explicitly state that the guest can "obtain user-level registration", and that the request for approval is sent "by email" to the application administrator. As appears to have been acknowledged by the Examiner, Starr does not include or suggest these features. As noted previously, Starr deals solely with financial transactions operations such as bill payment, payroll services, and bank account information, while the present invention, in

contrast, allows generic registration and entitlement functions for any industry and provides approval notifications by e-mails sent to prospective approvers. As noted previously, Starr wholly lacks the storing of links to all applications for which the guest is approved where the links are reflected in the personalized supplier portal home page. That is, the passage in column 10, lines 4-12 of Starr discloses the ability of a user to access a server through the Internet and to run applications resident on the server. In contrast, as is best set forth in the paragraphs beginning on the bottom of page 11 of the application, the Supplier Portal 40 is a dynamic site where application specific attributes can be added by each host application administrator. The Supplier Portal 40 can be hosted by intranet or Internet domains. As explained on page 12, there guest proceeds through a self registration exercise, and, as explained on page 13, at lines 13 et seq., the guest can then use public access applications from the supplier portal home page or restricted applications by clicking Login then entering userid and password. The user then access the restricted application simply by clicking on the link.

In short, Starr is focused on the small business owner being able to manage a number of different financial accounts (see Abstract). He will access, through his server, different vendors (financial service providers, payroll, etc.) and engage in different financial transactions. In sharp contrast, the claimed invention is focused on a process for managing data using a single interface in a shared space environment over the internet. The guest, in operation, builds up a home page of applications which he or she is allowed to access via links on the Web (i.e., authorization processes are included for restricted applications). Starr does not show or discuss anything related to building up a home page of links to applications which are accessible over the Web. Therefore, claims 1-7 should be in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

A provisional petition is hereby made for any extension of time necessary for the continued pendency during the life of this application. Please charge any fees for such provisional petition and any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Deposit Account No. 09-0458 (IBM-Fishkill).

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael E. Whitham', written in a cursive style.

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